

Beginning Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program

Technical Assistance for Application and Revision

This document is designed to assist districts in the completing/revising the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan Amendment for Mentoring and Induction Funds. It is based on the Mentoring and Induction Model Framework developed by the AEAs in 1999 and has been revised to reflect the 2001 legislation for the Teacher Quality Initiative. The document begins with a brief overview to the topic and then outlines the format of the document.

Considerations:

When writing the proposals it is important to remember the intent of the statute and the rules in Chapter 83 regarding mentor/induction programs. Please remember that the mentoring/induction program is two years in length. Also, keep in mind that this program is part of the new Teacher Quality Initiative and that the technical assistance provided in this document is designed to aid and assist writers to meet the intent of the statute and rules. It is expected that the criteria, guidance, and examples that follow will aid districts in developing quality mentor and induction programs.

This document uses actual language from the application. Guidance is provided for each section of Part II of the application and is followed by examples. If needed, the full application can be accessed from the Department of Education web site under Teacher Compensation, "Applications".

AEA's throughout the state are providing assistance in completing and revising this amendment application. In some cases, an AEA may be providing a "template" for a district to use. Please remember that a "template" is a guide in completing the CSIP amendment. Each district should personalize the "template" to address the context of the local district.

Belief statements about a high quality mentoring and induction program:

A quality teacher mentoring program-

Focuses on researched-based teaching and learning theories.

Requires close relationships between veteran teachers and beginning teachers that is supported by building administrators.

Is part of an overall effort to support quality teaching and to increase the achievement of all students.

Is planned, reviewed and modified by representatives, who plan, implement, and participate in the program.

Part II -Content, Format and Instructions

Below are the components of the program that must be addressed in your CSIP amendment. Submit a narrative that addresses the criteria under each component in the order shown. All requirements must be met in order for a district to receive funds. Requirements are outlined in 281 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 83 Noticed Rules on the Department's Web page at www.state.ia.us/educate under "Teacher

Compensation." For the reviewers' understanding, please use the headings and other designations as shown in this outline.

A. Cover Page (page 1 of the CSIP Amendment)

Include the cover page for your CSIP amendment. It should be placed on the front as the first visible page. This page includes specific district information including the number of new teachers participating.

B. Goals

List the goal(s) for the Beginning Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program in your district.

The goals must be aligned with state legislative goals for beginning teacher mentor and induction programs and support the Iowa Teaching Standards. Program goals should be realistic and measurable. Please remember that program goals should align with Program Evaluation in Section G of the application. Carefully consider the number of goals for your program, as the district will need to assess and evaluate the degree to which program goals are met.

Goals for the Beginning Teacher Mentoring and Induction Programs in the legislation

- To promote excellence in teaching
- To enhance student achievement
- To build a supportive environment within school districts
- To increase the retention of promising beginning teachers
- To promote the personal and professional well being of classroom teachers.

Iowa Teaching Standards

- a. Demonstrates ability to enhance academic performance and support for and implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
- b. Demonstrates competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position.
- c. Demonstrates competence in planning and preparing for instruction.
- d. Uses strategies to deliver instruction that meets the multiple learning needs of students.
- e. Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
- f. Demonstrates competence in classroom management.
- g. Engages in professional growth.
- h. Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

Examples

Goal 1: Promising teachers new to the teaching profession will be retained.

Goal 2: The school climate meets the needs of beginning and experienced teachers.

Goal 3: Beginning teachers will reflect and identify professional growth and future targets for continuous improvement.

C. Mentor Training

Describe how the training:

1. Is consistent with staff development practices and adult professional needs including skills for classroom teaching, demonstration, and coaching;
2. Addresses mentor needs;
3. Reflects a clear understanding of the role of the mentor;

4. Results in the mentor's understanding of the personal and professional needs of beginning teachers;
5. Will provide the mentor with an understanding of the district's expectations for beginning teachers' competencies based on the Iowa teaching standards; and
6. Prepares mentors to provide guidance and support to beginning teachers.

Each mentor needs extensive ongoing training and support. Training will assure the steps in quality professional development, including research, theory, demonstration, practice, coaching and feedback. Quality programs provide at least 30 hours of ongoing training during the initial year.

Please remember to address in narrative form how the district will implement mentor training. A list of activities does not suffice in meeting the criteria for Section C: 1-6. Be specific in describing the process for training mentors. Timelines or timetables may be useful in demonstrating that your program is ongoing and comprehensive. Please remember to address each of the six criteria in this section.

Mentor training should provide or address the following:

- A. An overview of the "mentor role"
- B. An understanding of the purpose of mentoring
- C. Develop skills in teacher observation, adult learning, classroom management, and effective teaching
- D. An understanding of district expectations for all teachers and specifically for new teachers based upon local needs and prioritization of beginners' needs
- E. Practice for reflective questioning and coaching
- F. An understanding of the change process and phases of development
- G. Practice of teacher observation
- H. Strategies for guiding and supporting beginning teachers, including social and emotional support
- I. An understanding of the adult motivation to learn and the organization of adult learning opportunities
- J. The use of classroom experiences for learning
- K. The development and use a common language to articulate and apply appropriate classroom management and teaching techniques (e.g., diagnosing student needs, lesson design, motivating students to learn, learning styles, problem-solving techniques, alternative instructional strategies, assessment of student learning, planning and time management)

D. Mentor Selection Process

Describe how mentors will be selected in your district.

The selection of the mentor is an important component in developing a quality mentoring and induction program. A mentor is a leader and should be an exemplary teacher. Please remember to personalize the process of mentor selection to your district. One size does not fit all!

Teachers selected to be mentors must meet the requirements the established in the legislation:

- An individual employed by a school district or area education agency as a classroom teacher or a retired teacher who holds a valid license issued under chapter
- The individual must have a record of four years of successful teaching practice
- Must be employed as a classroom teacher on a non-probationary basis
- Must demonstrate professional commitment to both the improvement of teaching and learning and the development of beginning teachers

The district will develop a process for selection and assignment of mentors that generally includes the following:

- A district will develop local descriptors of preferred mentor qualities
- Develop an application
- Publicize the application and selection process

- Anyone may apply
- While it is considered ideal and preferable for both mentor and beginning teacher to teach the same subject, same grade level, and be located near each other, in many cases that is not possible.

Examples

Criteria for Mentor Selection:

Teachers will go through an application and interview process. Those who demonstrate the criteria identified below will enter a district mentor pool.

Evidence of a minimum of 4 years of exemplary classroom teaching.

Demonstrates a positive impact on student achievement and the use of data-driven decision making.

Evidence of commitment to students' success and their learning.

Willing to provide personal time and attention to the beginning teacher.

Demonstrates commitment to teaching excellence.

Demonstrates strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Demonstrates commitment to working with beginning teachers.

Demonstrates ability to work with adults.

Willingly engages in active, open learning.

Demonstrates coaching skills.

Demonstrates flexibility.

E. Support for Beginning Teachers

Describe how the plan will:

1. Reflect the needs of beginning teachers,
2. Help beginning teachers develop and enhance competencies for the Iowa Teaching Standards, and
3. Address activities that provide research-based instructional strategies.

Support for new teachers has two different components. One component is the interactions of the new teacher with the mentor. There should be 15-20 hours of interaction with mentors. The interactions with mentors should be ongoing during the year and focus on the phases of the beginning teacher's first year:

Anticipation - August

Survival - September & October

Disillusionment - November to January

Rejuvenation - February & March

Reflection - April & May

Anticipation - June and July

The second component is the induction processes and activities that will aid and assist the new teacher in becoming a successful teacher. Please remember that the mentoring/induction program is two years in length. The needs of first year teachers are different than those of second year teachers. The application should show a continuum of experiences that address the criteria (1-3) found in Section E.

Please remember to address in narrative form how the district will address supporting the needs of beginning teachers. A list of activities does not suffice in meeting the criteria for Section E: 1-3. Be specific in describing the support for new teachers. Timelines or timetables may be useful in demonstrating that your program addresses the needs of the beginning teacher.

Examples

1. Reflect the needs of beginning teachers,

The program should contain an orientation component for beginning teachers to learn building and district procedures and policies

Emotional needs- overcoming feelings of isolation, interacting with colleagues, and preparing for career level licensure

Instructional needs such as:

- Planning and preparing learning activities
- Creating an effective classroom environment
- Implementing learning activities
- Professional responsibilities
- Some possible topics and issues valuable to new teachers
- Communicating and relating to parents
- Motivating and disciplining students
- Dealing with individual differences
- Assessing students' work
- Learning to grow professionally using self-reflection
- Demonstrate ability to meet Iowa Teaching Standards
- Involve beginning teachers in the planning of staff development programs for new teachers

2. Help beginning teachers develop and enhance competencies for the Iowa Teaching Standards.

Both mentor and beginning teacher will understand the district's expectations for beginning teachers' competencies based on the Iowa teaching standards; generally this will be based on the district's current evaluation system

The beginning teacher will have many opportunities to reflect on practice and identify areas of future growth in relationship to the Iowa Teaching Standards.

3. Address activities that provide research-based instructional strategies.

The plan may provide opportunities for beginning teachers to:

- a. Conduct and participate in action research activities
- b. Work and learn in study groups with other staff members
- c. Work and learn in staff development classes

F. Supportive Organizational Structure

Describe how the structure provides access and opportunities for interaction for mentors and beginning teachers that:

1. Includes released time for mentors and beginning teachers to plan,
2. Supports the demonstration of classroom practices,
3. Allows for mentors and beginning teachers to observe teaching practices,
4. Allows for feedback,
5. Determines who will be in the mentor/beginning teacher partnership,
6. Supports the roles and responsibilities of the mentor, and
7. Allows for the dissolution of the mentor/beginning teacher partnership.

One of the critical components of a successful mentoring and induction program is the supportive organizational structure. In completing Section F, there should be strong evidence of district support in the implementation, monitoring, and sustaining of the mentor and induction program.

Please remember to address in narrative form how the district will provide the necessary supportive organizational structure for a successful mentoring/induction program. Please be specific in describing each criteria point. This section requires a commitment of resources by the district and should be carefully addressed. Remember to personalize this section to reflect the context of your district.

The examples listed below include those types of support, which are critical in having a quality program.

Examples

1. Includes released time for mentors and beginning teachers to plan,
 - Common planning time for mentors and beginning teachers
 - Providing substitutes to release mentors and beginning teachers for observations and plans
 - Administrators and other teachers cover classes to allow mentor and beginning teacher to observe and/or meet.
2. Supports the demonstration of classroom practices,
 - Beginning teachers observe mentors and others teach, collect information as part of the visit, and then reflect on the observation with the mentor.
 - Mentors observe beginning teachers, gather data, and meet with the beginning teacher to allow the beginning teacher to reflect on the observation.
3. Allows for mentors and beginning teachers to observe teaching practices,
 - Beginning teachers observe mentors and others teach, collect information as part of the visit, and then reflect on the observation with the mentor.
 - Mentors observe beginning teachers, gather data, and meet with the beginning teacher to allow the beginning teacher to reflect on the observation.
4. Allows for feedback,
 - Mentors meet with the beginning teacher to guide the beginning teacher in reflection on teaching and provide them with data and information that allows the beginning teacher to determine progress and identify future professional development.
 - Determines who will be in the mentor/beginning teacher partnership,

Each beginning teacher will be provided with a support team that includes:

- An instructional mentor
- A supporting neighbor
- A curriculum advisor
- An administrative guide

Guidelines for assigning mentors to beginning teachers should consider issues such as:

- Age and gender
- Grade level
- Content area
- Physical proximity
- Teaching style
- Educational ideology

5. Supports the roles and responsibilities of the mentor, and

- Intensive and meaningful mentor training will be provided
- Time will be structured to allow the mentor to work with the new teacher

6. Allows for the dissolution of the mentor/beginning teacher partnership.

- Create a cadre or pool of mentors to provide flexibility if the need for reassignment occurs.
- Realize that when mentoring relationships are not successful, they may be a reflection of the difference in style.
- When a mentor/beginning teacher relationship is not successful, it may be changed/modified/dissolved at the request of either party.

G. Program Evaluation

Describe the program evaluation process. The process must:

1. Evaluate district success in meeting program goals,
2. Provide for the minor and major program revisions, and
3. Include a process for how information will be shared with interested stakeholders.

Program evaluation is a required element of this application. Please remember that this application is an amendment to your CSIP and subject to the same accountability. There should be a clear alignment of program goals and the methods being used to evaluate the success of the program. Consider listing the goals in Section B and specifically describing how each goal will be evaluated. Please remember that there should be both formative and summative elements in the program evaluation. There should be a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data.

Please remember to address in narrative form how the district will evaluate the mentoring/induction program in order to demonstrate and document success. Please be specific in describing each criteria point. This section requires components that address the goals, provide for system adjustment, and create a process for reporting. Remember to personalize this section to reflect the context of your district

Examples

Goal 1: Promising teachers new to the teaching profession will be retained.

The district will monitor beginning teacher and report retention trends and conduct exit interview with teachers leaving the district.

Goal 2: The school climate enhances the well being of beginning and experienced teachers.

The district will gather and analyze perceptual data through interviews, surveys, and focus groups.

Goal 3: Beginning teachers will reflect and identify professional growth and future targets for continuous improvement.

The district will collect and analyze beginning teacher self-reports and mentor program reports (i.e. reflective logs/journals, interviews, and end-of-year summaries).